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THE BIRTHPLACE
OF
THE AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY
AND
OTHER HISTORICAL PAPERS

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MAR 2 1916

THE OLD GARDEN STREET REFORMED CHURCH
In this building, on the 8th of May, 1816, the Convention met which organized the American Bible Society

Centennial Pamphlets, No. 5

AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY
NEW YORK
1916

Universal Bible Sunday

The dominant thought and aim of the Centennial Celebration of the American Bible Society is **the exaltation of the Word of God.**

In commemoration of the blessings which have flowed from the Bible, and in gratitude for the good hand of God upon the Society throughout the 100 years during which it has put forth and circulated the Scriptures, and which 100 years end on the 7th of May, 1916, it is requested that that day be observed as

UNIVERSAL BIBLE SUNDAY

In this observance churches of many denominations throughout the United States have indicated their intention to join. It will also be observed by union meetings in large centers, and by special exercises in Sunday Schools, Young People's Societies and other church organizations throughout the length and breadth of our great country.

As the sun brings light that day to our southern continent, there, too, will be gathered, in observance of this day, those who love the Word of God. Assurances have already been given that in the Islands of the Seven Seas, in the far Philippines, in the Land of the Rising Sun, in Bible-loving Korea, in great seeking China, in Siam and India, along the Persian Gulf and the Delta of the Nile, and even in war-smitten Europe, there will be those who will join in this grateful recognition of the blessings from The Book.

Will those who read these lines all join in the observance of this day, or a later date, if more convenient? Literature to assist in such observance may be had from

The Secretaries, Bible House, Astor Place, New York City.

Centennial History of the Bible Society

The Rev. Henry Otis Dwight, LL.D., the Recording Secretary of the Society, has for more than a year now been set aside for the one purpose of writing the Society's History. It is a story of intense interest and intrinsic value for all who rejoice in, and watch solicitously, the growth and development of our own country or the growth and development of the kingdom of God the world over.

It will be a volume of about 600 pages, with illustrations. Cloth bound, it will be $1; paper bound, 50 cents. The Macmillan Company will publish it for the Society. Orders or inquiries may be addressed to

The Secretaries, Bible House, Astor Place, New York City.

HISTORICAL PAPERS

THE BIRTHPLACE OF THE SOCIETY — Lewis Birge Chamberlain

THE BIRTH OF THE SOCIETY — Henry Otis Dwight

THE RATIFICATION MEETING AND CITY HALL — Lewis Birge Chamberlain

NEW YORK ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO, AND SOME THOUGHTS — Gerard Beekman

THE CITY OF WASHINGTON, NATIONAL LEADERS AND THE SOCIETY — Lewis Birge Chamberlain

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206
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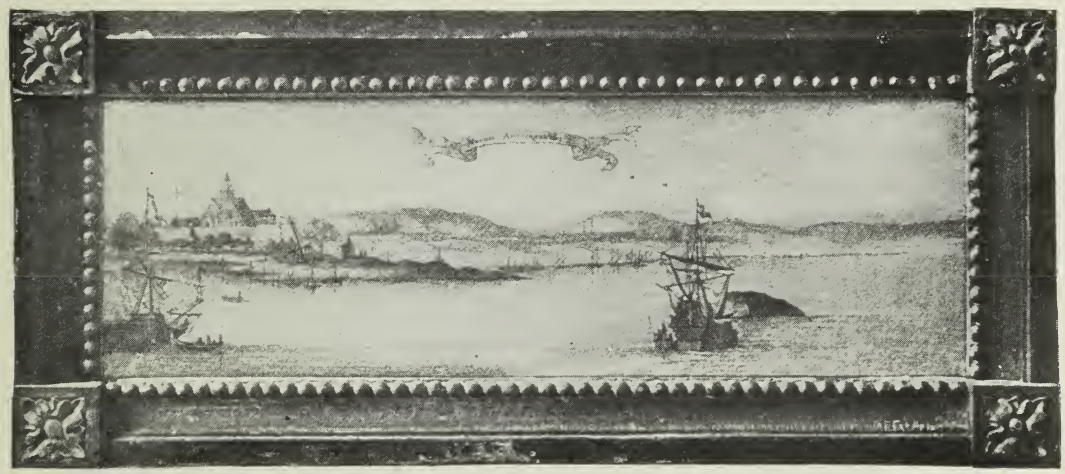
The Birthplace
OF
The American Bible Society

Lewis Birge Chamberlain

CENTENNIALS make place for profitable reminiscences. The marvelous growth of New York has wiped out most of her early landmarks. The marches of commerce, no less than the battles of war, are destructive of historical buildings.

The American Bible Society not only has had an honorable century-long life, but it also had an honorable birthplace. It was in the Consistory Room of the Garden Street Reformed (Dutch) Church that the convention of sixty gentlemen, which formed the American Bible Society, met on May 8, 1816. This edifice was erected for the use



NEW YORK IN 1650
"THE CHURCH IN THE FORT" AND NEW AMSTERDAM AS SEEN FROM THE SHIP "LYDIA"
Facsimile of an original drawing made in 1650 by Laurens Hermanz Block, in its ancient frame, now in the possession of the New York Historical Society

of the congregation of the historic "Collegiate Church." The congregation first began worship in a mill loft, being the earliest to hold regular religious services on Manhattan Island. It was organized into a church in 1628, with Peter Minuit, Director-General of New Netherland, as its first Elder, and with reason claims to be the oldest Protestant church on this continent. From 1633 to 1642 the congregation worshiped in a plain wooden church erected on the site now known as 33 Pearl Street. Outgrowing this, it erected in 1642 the stone "Church of St. Nicholas," in Fort Amsterdam, in which it worshiped until 1693.

This "Church in the Fort" was a conspicuous landmark with its tower

and weathercock, as shown in the oldest extant pictures of New York. It stood where the United States Custom House now is, on lower Broadway. The congregation outgrowing in turn this edifice, a larger handsome brick church was erected on the "Garden Street" site. This edifice served for one hundred and fourteen years, until burned down in 1807. Then was erected that second "Garden Street Church," pictured on the cover, where the American Bible Society began its life. Garden Street is now Exchange Place. The Church site is now 41 to 51 Exchange Place.

The birthplace of the American Bible Society has been of "ancient and honorable" record not only in the material, but also in the spiritual, Church which helped it see the light.

There is no space, nor indeed in this connection, reason to mention even the names of the fine Christian individuals and families that have been associated with the congregations which used these various edifices, nor even the long line of ministers beginning with the Rev. Jonas Michaelius, who arrived in 1628 from Holland to be the first minister.

While definite in their own views of truth, there was a hospitable spirit of comity early exhibited by the congregation, officers and ministers. Two incidents may illustrate this. The English had no place for worship when they took possession of New Amsterdam. So, for more than thirty years, they held their services in the Garden Street (Dutch) Reformed Church building every Sunday morning after the Dutch services ended. Later the Rev. William Vesey, the first rector of Trinity Church, was inducted into that office in this same Garden Street Reformed Church building, Trinity Church not yet being completed. At the request of the English Governor, two ministers from the Reformed Dutch Church assisted in the service.

During the eighteenth century the constituency of the "Collegiate Church" grew so much that in 1729 another church was erected on Nassau Street, called the "Middle Church"; and in 1769 a third at the corner of Fulton and William Streets, called the "North Church." In this church the "Fulton Street Noon Prayer Meeting," which has blessed thousands of lives, was started in 1857, and it is still held in a room on this site, provided by the Collegiate Church. The Garden Street Church, being the most southern, was called the "South Church."

In 1812 the congregation of the "South" or Garden Street Church requested, and the Collegiate Church agreed, that it be made independent—a courageous step of devotion to high ideals of church responsibility and service. The Rev. James M. Matthews became the first pastor and proved a man of spiritual power, wide interests and broad sympathies, who favored and fostered co-operative efforts. It was not strange that under such auspices the convention which organized the American Bible Society met in this church building. Under Dr. Matthews the congregation outgrew the church, every pew being taken and there being quite a waiting

list when the disastrous fire of 1835 destroyed, in turn, this church building. The congregation then divided, one part erecting a church in Washington Square and another a church on Murray Street. Dr. Matthews, who the year before had become also Chancellor of the University of the City of New York, went with the Washington Square Church, as did Dr. Mancius S. Hutton, who had become assistant pastor. Here a large and influential work was done for several decades. The invasions of business and the departure of residents greatly altered conditions. In 1875 the church disbanded.

The Murray Street Church, which retained the historic name of the "South Church," had as its first pastor Dr. John Magoffin Macauley, under whom it also greatly flourished. In 1848 it built a new church on the corner of Fifth Avenue and Twenty-First Street, and subsequently moved to Madison Avenue and Thirty-Eighth Street, where, still known as the "South Church," under Dr. Ebenezer Platt Rogers, it had a large congregation and wide influence.

Two incidents, one under each pastorate, show the spirit and influence for service that came down the years with this congregation.

On a stormy night in 1854 a few were gathered in the usual prayer meeting, which turned into a friendly conference. Elder Thomas C. Doremus read a letter from Mr. Townsend Harris, United States Representative, reporting the ratification of the treaty between the United States and Japan. Dr. Macauley remarked that the Dutch had once before carried the gospel to Japan and said, "I do not see why they should not do it again." Mr. Doremus became thoughtful and finally asked, "What would be involved?" Dr. Macauley replied that at least three missionaries should be sent, and their support should be guaranteed for three years at $1,500 a year. Mr. Doremus agreed to give one $1,500, and went that stormy night to another member of the church, Mr. D. Jackson Steward, who promised a second $1,500. The third $1,500 was soon raised in the church.

Reporting this incident in his reminiscences of the South Church, Dr. Macauley says, "We soon found the men we needed: the Rev. Samuel R. Brown, a fine classical scholar, who had resided for years in the East, recommended to us by Bishop Boone of China as one of the best teachers of the Chinese language; Mr. Guido Verbeck, a Hollander, who when in his native land had been anxious to devote himself to foreign missions, and who in this country had become familiar with engineering, with the construction of locomotives and the laying of railroads; and a young physician and surgeon who had been in Paris and could speak French. Dr. Brown proved a most efficient man and won the esteem of all. Dr. Verbeck, I need not say, has risen to the highest posts of usefulness."

Thus Drs. Brown and Verbeck became honored missionary pioneers in

Japan, and the stormy night prayer meeting of this church thus gave birth to the Japan Mission of the Reformed Church in America. It did something else. In Drs. Brown and Verbeck it provided two of the translators of the first Japanese Bible printed by the American Bible Society, which contributed to their salaries while they were thus occupied.

Under the pastorate of Dr. Rogers there stood out in the membership of the church Mrs. Doremus, of sainted memory, wife of Elder Doremus, mentioned above. Under her leadership was organized, in 1861, the Women's Union Missionary Society, the first independent female missionary organization in America, and one that has been a blessing to thousands of women and children in the Orient. An interesting further link with the American Bible Society lies in the fact that the office of the Women's Union Missionary Society has been in the Bible House for half a century.

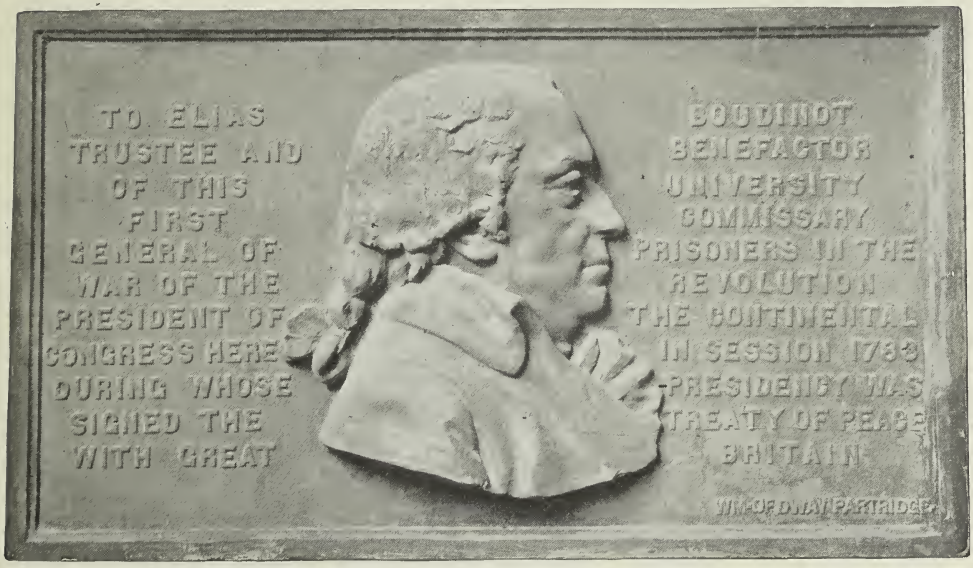
Centennials are profitably reminiscent when they recall to younger generations conditions from which great movements have arisen and wide service has resulted. The American Bible Society recognizes the good hand of God in bringing it into life and service, and rejoices in its honorable birthplace.

The Birth of the Society

Selections from
The Centennial History of the American Bible Society
Henry Otis Dwight

ON the 8th of May, 1816, the Consistory Room of the Garden Street Dutch Reformed Church was opened to a meeting of clergy and laymen interested in the question whether the new West could be led to learn God's ways in nation-building. The struggle between good and evil was in the thoughts of all the delegates. In one sense that struggle was transferred from the frontiers in the valley of the great river to this city meetinghouse. Here, God willing, the great question was to touch decision.

For, this was the gathering which the Hon. Elias Boudinot, LL.D., the president of the New Jersey Bible Society, had called to choose some



TABLET AT PRINCETON TO THE HON. ELIAS BOUDINOT, LL.D.
A chief factor in the establishment of the Society; its first President, and, by a later gift of $10,000, its first large benefactor

practicable method of carrying God's Word westward to the thousands fast settling into content with irreligion. Dr. Boudinot had rendered distinguished services to his country during the Revolutionary War; as President of the National Congress at the close of that war, he had signed the treaty of peace with Great Britain; and now it was his high privilege to sign a document which, in his hope, would stand for much in the history of his country, saved to permanent loyalty to the Lord Jesus

Christ. That the call for a convention of Bible societies was signed on his sick bed detracted but little from his satisfaction. He was not able to be present at this memorable gathering.

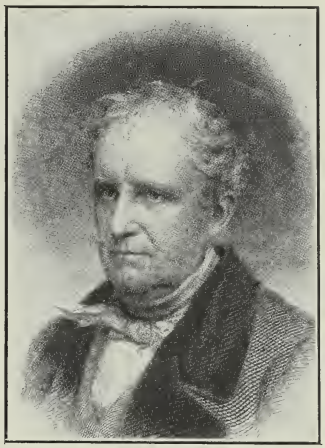
Behind the visitors, far back in the room, sat Samuel J. Mills, the "father of American foreign missions," who was used of God also in establishing the American Bible Society. It is an arresting fact that there is no portrait can be found of one who was instrumental in inaugurating two such world-blessing movements. Two journeys, in 1812 and 1813, into the then western and southern states, where he found great destitution of the Bible, brought him north again with passionate and persistent appeals for the organization of a National Bible Society. Though met with divided counsels and opposition, he also met cheer and co-operation. The most effective was that rendered by Dr. Boudinot. And now he had come to this gathering, full of hope, howbeit, with a heart weighted down with fear for the outcome of a meeting of so many sects.

Mr. Joshua H. Wallace, of Burlington, N. J., an Episcopalian and a leading member of the New Jersey Bible Society, was chosen chairman of the Convention. The Rev. Dr. John B. Romeyn, delegate from the New York Bible Society, pastor of the Cedar Street Reformed Dutch Church and a man of great influence in the city; and the Rev. Dr. Lyman Beecher, the father of "all the Beechers," a young man who as pastor of the Congregational Church at Litchfield, Conn., had already fought well as a champion of temperance among the clergy, were appointed secretaries of the Convention.

The Convention was composed of men who were all distinguished in some direction. There was John Griscom, of the Society of Friends, organizer of the common-school system of New Jersey, a philosopher, as well as a professor of chemistry. Another representative of the Society of Friends was Valentine Mott, the distinguished surgeon, of whom Sir Astley Cooper said, later on, "He has performed more great operations than any man living, or who ever did live." Another man of note was the Rev. Dr. Nathaniel W. Taylor, pastor of the First Congregational Church at New Haven, delegate of the Connecticut Bible Society. He was a very eloquent preacher, but was regarded by some of his contemporaries as a heretic. Another member was the Rev. Gardiner Spring, pastor of the Brick Presbyterian Church in New York, then located in Beekman Street. His ministry was remarkable for its length and its power. He was pastor of the Brick Church for sixty-

VALENTINE MOTT, M.D.
A founder of the Society

three years. Mr. Spring had often crossed swords with Dr. Taylor, of New Haven, in a sharp controversy upon freedom of the will. Another battle-scarred controversialist was the Rev. Dr. Jedidiah Morse, pastor of the First Congregational Church at Charlestown, Massachusetts. It was only a few years after this Convention that Dr. Morse, broken in health by brooding over the violence of his theological opponents, had to resign his pastorate. Next to him we may note the Rev. Mr. Henshaw, a rising young Episcopal minister who afterward became Bishop of Rhode Island. Another man of distinction was Mr. Joseph C. Hornblower, of Newark, who later became Chief Justice of New Jersey. James Fenimore Cooper, the novelist, was there as one of the delegates from Otsego County Bible Society. He was notable on account of his participation in the work of that day, even if he had not afterward gained admiration as a teller of entrancing American stories.



JAMES FENIMORE COOPER
One of the founders of the American Bible Society

Another delegate was a printer and publisher of Utica, N. Y.—Mr. William Williams, whose son, S. Wells Williams, gained renown as a missionary, as a master of Chinese, as a statesman, and later as President of the American Bible Society.

An eminent educator in the great Convention was the Rev. Dr. Eliphalet Nott, for sixty-three years President of Union College, New York, a most genial disciplinarian, whose students always delighted to tell of their encounters with his keen wit. He was also distinguished as a pulpit orator, his sermon on the death of Alexander Hamilton creating such an impression that it sounded the death knell of duelling in America. His versatile ability was also illustrated by his invention of the first stove for burning anthracite coal. The originator of Sunday schools in the state of New Jersey was there—the Rev. Dr. John MacDowell, then pastor at Elizabethtown, N. J. The delegate of the Westchester County Bible Society was William Jay, Esq., son of the great statesman, John Jay, a schoolmate and warm friend of James Fenimore Cooper

REV. ELIPHALET NOTT, D.D., LL.D.
Chairman of the Committee which prepared the first Constitution of the Society

and an eminent conchologist as well as statesman, who was moved by his benevolent spirit to elaborate the first detailed scheme for the arbitration of difficulties between nations. But this list must serve as a sample of the material making up this Convention.

Dr. Nott was called upon to offer prayer. In that earnest petition for the guidance of the Holy Spirit were expressed the solemnity of the moment and the yearnings of every heart in that room. The solemn silence in the Convention was hardly disturbed by the quiet questions and answers as the list of delegates was made, and letters from other Bible societies not represented by delegates were read, expressing approval of the general design of the meeting.

When the roll of delegates had been made up, the object of the meeting was presented and freely discussed, not without divergencies of view. Dr. Lyman Beecher wrote of the Convention many years later: "There was one moment in our proceedings when things seemed to tangle and some feeling began to rise. At that moment Dr. Mason rose hastily and said: 'Mr. President, the Lord Jesus never built a church but what the devil built a chapel close to it; and he is here now, this moment, in this room, with his finger in the inkhorn—not to write your constitution, but to blot it out.'" The laughter caused by this sally dispelled the storm and the clear sun appeared again. To the amazement of all present, these champions of denominational competition stood at one point of view. In the afternoon, when a resolution was presented that "it is expedient to establish without delay a general Bible institution for the circulation of the Holy Scriptures without note or comment," it was adopted without a dissenting vote.

The chairman of the Convention, Joshua M. Wallace, of New Jersey, could not control his emotion. His eyes filled with tears, and he said, "Thank God! Thank God!"

Almost hidden behind the crowd in the rear of the room sat Samuel J. Mills, the man who had concentrated upon securing the organization of a national Bible Society his great executive power in exciting and combining minds for benevolent work. When he saw that the day was won, a look of heavenly delight spread over his countenance.

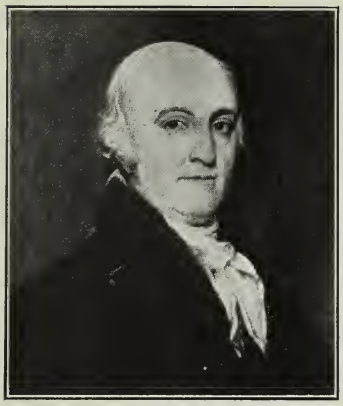
The smiles exchanged between the members of the Convention showed that this unanimous action had drawn them all closer together, like the members of an exploring party when from some Pisgah they have gained their first view of a promised land. One thought was in every mind: "It is the work of God!"

These sixty men for the Master's sake set aside strong personal preferences. Under divine guidance at a crisis in the national growth they had called into being an institution suited to the emergency, which would provide the nation with Scriptures and make many souls glad forever.

Having appointed a committee to prepare a draft of a constitution

and also an address to the public, the Convention adjourned to Friday, May 10, at 11 a.m.; and its members joyfully congratulated each other, giving glory to God, like the man who received his sight at the word of Jesus.

When the Convention met on the 10th, the committee, through Dr. Nott, presented its draft of a constitution. This was read, discussed, considered paragraph by paragraph, and "*unanimously adopted*"!



From portrait in City Hall by Trumbull.
COLONEL RICHARD VARICK
First Treasurer and Third President of the Society.
Second Mayor of New York, 1789–1801.

The committee also reported an address to the people of the United States, which was approved by the Convention. This was written by the Rev. John Mitchell Mason, D.D., of the Associate Reformed Church, and at the time of this Convention provost of Columbia College.

After having adopted the constitution the Convention chose thirty-six Managers.

The Managers met in the "New City Hall" on May 11th and proceeded to choose as

President: Hon. Elias Boudinot, LL.D., of New Jersey.

Vice-Presidents: Hon. John Jay, LL.D., of New York, first Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court, and twenty-two others.

Secretary for Foreign Correspondence: The Rev. J. M. Mason, D.D.

Secretary for Domestic Correspondence: The Rev. J. B. Romeyn, D.D.

Treasurer: Col. Richard Varick.

Colonel Varick had been a member of Washington's military family. His tested efficiency and high character were a better protection than bolts and bars for the cash of the Society. His energy of mind and military habit of punctuality made him a valuable officer. He loved the work of the Society. Later he contributed $1,500 to the building of the Society's house, in addition to donations of twice that amount for its general work.

A committee of the Managers communicated information of the choice of officers to the Convention.

The Convention, having received notification that the organization of the new Society was now complete, adopted a resolution by which the city of New York was fixed as the place in which the first annual meeting of the American Bible Society should be held. The business being now accomplished, the meeting was closed with prayer by the Rev. Mr. Wilmer, and the Convention was dissolved.

The American Bible Society had been born.

NEW YORK CITY HALL AS IT STOOD IN 1816

Reproduced by courtesy of the Art Commission of the City of New York

The Ratification Meeting

AND

The City Hall, May 13, 1816

Lewis Birge Chamberlain

THE birth of the American Bible Society was a matter of wide interest and recognized significance at the time it occurred. The daily papers of a century ago devoted much space to a record of, and correspondence about, it. The files of the *New York Evening Post*, the *New York Herald*, the *New York Commercial Advertiser*, and the *New York Spectator*, of May, 1816 (in the New York Public Library), and *The Panoplist*, a monthly magazine published in Boston, show what an important event it was.

The organization of the Society, begun in the Garden Street Reformed Dutch Church, on May 8, 1816, and completed at the City Hall, May 11, 1816, by the adoption of a constitution and the election of officers, was made known through the public press and by announcement in the pulpits of New York churches on Sunday, May 12th, when all interested were invited to a public "Ratification Meeting," to be held on May 13th, in the "New City Hall."

The importance of this Ratification Meeting in the thought of that day is indicated not more by the attention given it in the public press than by the importance of those who participated. In the somewhat formal language of the time, the *New York Commercial Advertiser* of May 14, 1816, begins its account of this event:

"According to public notice, a numerous and respectable assembly of the citizens of New York, and other persons in the city, 'friendly to the American Bible Society,' yesterday convened in the City Hall."

The report records that on the motion of the Hon. Chief Justice Thompson, seconded by the Hon. Justice Van Ness, his Honor the Mayor (Jacob Radcliff) took the chair. Others participating by motions and addresses were Justice Platt, Dr. Eliphalet Nott, George Griffin, and Peter A. Jay. With the formality of those days, record is made of the thanks of the meeting to the Corporation of the City for the use of the room, to the Mayor for presiding, and to the speakers.

The persons present then "proceeded to subscribe to papers prepared in support of this institution," and a paragraph praising the addresses closes with the sentence: "The Meeting was conducted and concluded with a decorum, harmony and unanimity which it is to be hoped will always characterize the meetings of Americans for promoting the best interests of mankind."

A happy outcome of the preparations for the celebration of the Centennial of the Society in May, 1916, has been the identification of the room in which this Meeting was held.

OLD "SESSIONS COURT ROOM," NOW THE BOARD OF ESTIMATE'S ROOM

Neither the records at the Bible House or at the City Hall, nor the reports of the contemporary press of one hundred years ago, afforded any clue.

During this century the *exterior* of the City Hall has remained unchanged, except for the addition of a story to the cupola for the introduction of a clock. The full page picture preceding this article shows the City Hall as it stood in 1816, without the clock. It is a reproduction of the valuable aquatint, made by W. G. Wall, printed and engraved by I. Hill, in 1826, and presented to the then Mayor, Philip Hone. It now adorns the office of the Municipal Art Commission, by whose kind permission this reproduction has been made.

The *interior* of the City Hall, however, has been altered in many ways and times through the century—some of the larger rooms having been partitioned into smaller ones, and the use and names of all not infrequently changed. It is a matter of considerable historic interest, therefore, that the room used for the inauguration of the Bible Society has been positively identified.

The clue was discovered by research in the archives of the city. In the Minutes of the Common Council the record was found under date of May 13, 1816, that "a request of the American Bible Society to be permitted to hold the Meeting this day in the Sessions Court Room in the

City Hall was read and granted." Through the suggestions and courtesy of city and historical authorities this "Sessions Court Room" was ultimately identified. Examination of the original working drawings of John McComb, architect of the City Hall, preserved at the New York Historical Society, discovered, in faint penciling, on the ground plan of the northwest room of the second floor, the words, "Sessions Court Room." This is the present room of the Board of Estimate and Apportionment.

It is known to many, and it is much to the praise of the present city administration, that the interior of New York's historic City Hall has been restored completely to its original condition, with the exception of the Board of Aldermen's Room. This work, initiated by a gift of Mrs. Russell Sage for the purpose of restoring the Governor's Room, carried on under the Municipal Art Commission, with Mr. Robert W. de Forest as Chairman, and especially fostered and financed under the regime of Mr. McAneny (until recently President of the Board of Aldermen), now gives New York a historic building worthy of preservation and interest along with Philadelphia s Independence Hall and Boston's Fanueil Hall.

But it is an interesting fact that the original "Sessions Court Room" (now the Board of Estimate's Room), in which the Bible Society was launched on its career of service, is the one room which has throughout the century remained almost intact. Only in the matter of its being supplied with benches appropriate to its original architecture, and in some minor decorations, has it been restored.

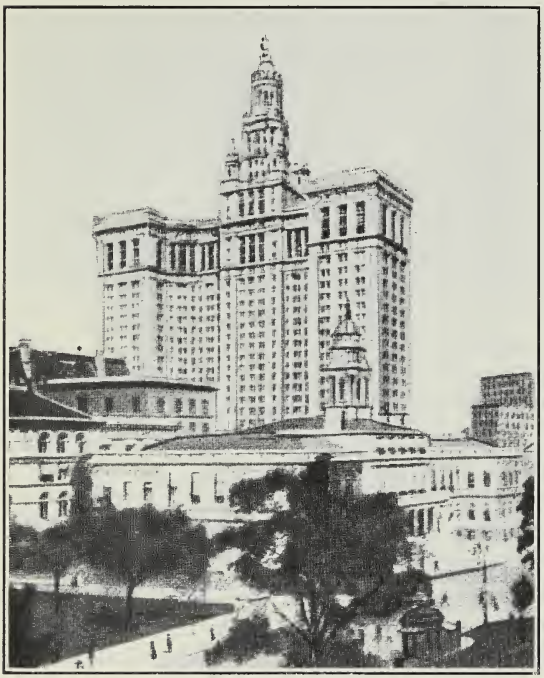
Mayor Mitchel, for the present city administration, following the courtesy and hospitality of their predecessors of one hundred years ago, in response to a request has accorded the use of this very same room for an official Celebration of the Bible Society in New York City.

New York a Hundred Years Ago, and Some Thoughts

Gerard Beekman

HISTORY, to be understood properly, should be a succession of instantaneous pictures representing the state of the world on the first day of each century. Then by going backward, with steps each of one hundred years, we can see, without confusion of the intermediate facts, the trend of events.

The possibility of one such step is before us in the Centennial of the American Bible Society. Overshadowing the City Hall there now rises a great Municipal Building, the largest structure for such purpose in the world. These two buildings, side by side, suggest the contrast between the New York of the Then and the New York of the Now. In 1816 the population of the city was 100,619. In 1916 it is recorded as 5,047,221. There has been a fiftyfold increase in population. The initial income of the Bible Society, according to its second *Annual Report*, was about $40,000. Had there been an increase in the income in proportion to the increase in the population, the income now would be over $2,000,000. But the last Treasurer's statement shows an income of only $662,000, or one-third of $2,000,000.



THE OLD CITY HALL
AND THE NEW MUNICIPAL BUILDING

When we reflect that the Bible is the text-book of the Christian Church Universal, the standard-bearer of our faith, the inspirer and teacher of all true liberty, the guardian of the rights of the weak and oppressed, the very warp and woof of our fathers' lives, these facts are only too significant.

The Bible, and the Society which exists for the purpose of its translation, publication, and circulation, have not the place in our generation which they had in the generation one hundred years ago. A great change

has taken place. It is not correct to assert that the vast population of our country, epitomized by that of New York City, is "Godless." But, that its standards and ideals are different from those of a hundred years ago, cannot be denied.

The church is still the great pendulum regulating mankind and staying it from a mad whirl to its own self-destruction. In examining the standards of to-day we must, therefore, begin with the position of the church in Christendom; for it is a conceded fact that modern civilization reaches its highest level only when most dominated by the spirit of Christianity.

The Bible is the great civilizer. The Hebrew seer says: "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God."

Not only this high ideal, but the higher ideal set forth in our Lord's sublime summary of the Law, were those of our forefathers. Are they ours? Have they not been put aside for such modern dicta as: "The voice of the people is the voice of God"—"The church and state must be separate"—"Religious teaching must be excluded from public schools"—"Science is the supreme wisdom"—"Force is the ultimatum"? The central thought in the one case is unselfishness, a life of the spirit in man; in the other, self-centered egotism, a life of the material. In one the worship of God: in the other, of human reason. Christendom and this city have been influenced by both schools. Europe has accepted both, and the result of this impossible attempt is the present unnatural war—barbarism varnished with a thin covering of civilization; heathenism masquerading as Christianity.

Where stands the church to-day? Nominally it teaches the message of the gospel: "Peace on earth, good will toward men." Does schismatic and irreconcilable ecclesiasticism represent this message?

The differing views of the family groups of our fellow-men, views as necessarily divergent in detail as our racial differences, are facts which cannot be ignored in any plan for Christianizing national life. But the last and unchangeable prophecy of Revelation represents the nations of the future rendering homage to God as nations, not as a church; and Christendom must abandon the idea of ecclesiastical supremacy of a single organization of the Universal Church, for the Bible idea of national divisions of believers.

We are going wrong. No effort to unify the broken fragments of the Temple of God can ever be successful until Christendom becomes Christian: until the heart of the world is so touched by the wonders and pathos of the gospel as to obey its beneficent laws. The mistake of many earnest Christians has been, and is, the attempt to cast all the fluid mass of loving, suffering and trusting humanity into a solid statue of unyielding uniformity of organization. Men may create the cage of uniformity, but God has created the many kinds of birds within the cage, each after his kind—all

trying to escape into a wider life where full harmony alone comes with the free song of love and gratitude from the heart.

When Christians of the world unite in following Christ alone in his sublime life and teachings, when they adopt as their universal motto the words of the Hebrew seer, and construe them by the words of the Master when he commands service and not domination as the rule of his kingdom, then, and then only, may we hope to see the old City Hall and the new Municipal Building and the kingdoms of Christendom offering to God the glory and honor due him by his creatures.

If the last one hundred years speaks at all, it utters this warning voice, that the recognition by Christian nations of Christianity as the foundation of government is the necessity of the hour—the essential for disarmament and a world peace.

Not by more novelty, more experiment, more of man's devising are the dangers of this creeping paralysis of Godlessness to be annulled, but by humbly returning to the teachings of the great lessons of the Bible for guidance, by purifying Christianity from all admixture of worldly wisdom and expediency. With the commentary on these great fundamental principles of the Bible, illustrated by secular history, our safety for now and the time to come lies in once more coming back to the idea that man does not live by bread alone, but by every word which proceedeth from the mouth of God; that not by the materialism of to-day, but by the Word of God, is the life of the world to be raised to a higher level, a nobler plane.

The nations seem at the moment left to themselves, the inner light taken from them, and they no longer able to distinguish between good and evil. Is it not obvious, is it not the lesson of the century, that Christendom is under fearful disabilities, is threatened with lapse from primitive Christianity unless the nations as such profess and practice the Christian faith?

If these things are so, if by conforming our lives to a philosophy made up of the Word of God and the maxims of the world we are threatened with indifference, disbelief and Godlessness in Christendom, what should be done?

Clearly, the next generation should be educated to fear God and to keep his Commandments, to understand the fallacy of so-called progress and to discern between right and wrong.

What in this Centennial year of the Bible Society can so correct this evil as the advocacy of a universal distribution of the Bible in this country? A people trained in the Word of God will find it easier to demand diplomacy inspired by the Bible, and arbitration of national disputes in lieu of terror and the sword.

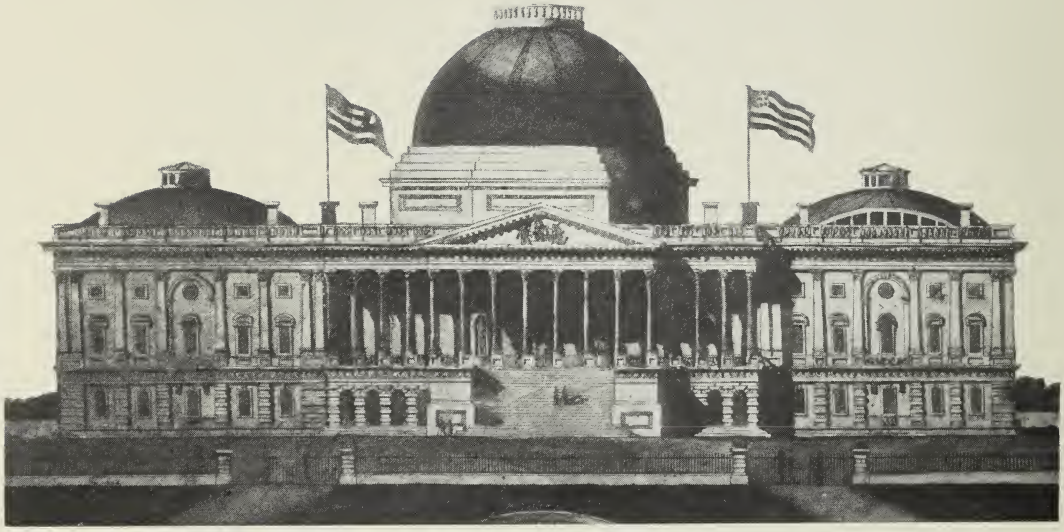
How sad and how terrible is the present inconsistency of Christendom! With the Bible in one hand and the sword in the other—by the former, teaching the Chinese and the Japanese the sublime doctrines of the Ser-

mon on the Mount and Paul's analysis of charity; and with the latter prosecuting merciless, treacherous, fratricidal war, based on selfish expediency, the barbarism of terror wearing on its Frankenstein breast the Order of the Cross!

So great a change as that of modern nations ruling in the spririt of Christ is worthy the effort of so great a body as the church, and the work cannot be better inaugurated than by demanding in this year 1916 that the Bible be the chief text-book in all education.

Is this an impracticable scheme? Has the philosophy of the world enslaved us to such a degree that Christendom is helpless? Is it not better to have an ideal beyond us, above us, than one on our own level?

Is it too much to hope for, to work for—this ideal—"The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ"?



THE CAPITOL AT WASHINGTON IN 1844

The City of Washington
National Leaders
AND
The Society

Lewis Birge Chamberlain

WASHINGTON is very apropriately to be the scene of an official Celebration of the Centennial of the American Bible Society. From the national capital has flowed a powerful stream of influence to and through the Society. Reciprocally, the Society has been contributing throughout its century a mighty influence toward the solution of great problems that ever confront the nation, and the statesmen gathered at Washington. This historical article would draw especial attention to this mutual service by national leaders and the Bible Society—a service perhaps unrealized by many.

Every notable achievement has its explanation in various influences and forces. The American Bible Society is a notable achievement. It is notable in that it has had but one great purpose for its one hundred years. It is notable in that, having but this one great purpose, it has yet measured up to the changing conditions, the special needs, and the ever-widening work which a Christian aim and a century's life must inevitably bring. It is notable for both the quantity and the quality of its century's accomplishment. What is the explanation of this notable achievement? The paramount factor is that the Society's one and sole object is the Bible—its multiplication and circulation. The other great factor is that the Society has been directed and served throughout the century by

National Leaders

The Hon. Elias Boudinot, LL.D., the first President, and the Hon. John Jay, LL.D., the first Vice-President and second President of the Society, are fitting types of statesmen in two great branches of the national government—the administrative and the judicial—who have rendered both the nation and the Society high service.

Dr. Boudinot had been President of Congress, and, as such, signed in 1783 the treaty which closed the War of the Revolution. Having held this, the highest civil office then in the gift of the young nation, Boudinot nevertheless considered it an honor to serve and guide the Society, which, indeed, he chiefly helped to found. So Presidents John Quincy Adams, Andrew Jackson, Zachary Taylor, Ulysses S. Grant, Rutherford B. Hayes, Benjamin Harrison, Grover Cleveland, Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson, all holders of the highest civil honor in the gift of the nation, have given the American Bible Society aid not only by their names and influence, but also by definite service. President Adams continued his

active connection with the Society for thirty years; even while President, as the facsimile letter below indicates. Ex-President Roosevelt, while Vice-President, delivered a notable address on the "text" that the Bible is "not only essential to Christianity but essential to good citizenship; that not only as good Christians, but as good citizens we have the right to challenge support for the work done by this and kindred societies." This address has been circulated by hundreds of thousands in many languages. As President he headed "A National Appeal" on behalf of the Society. President Woodrow Wilson, while Governor of New Jersey having made a noble address in behalf of the American Bible Society, at Denver, Colorado, now, as President, is to speak at the Centennial Celebration at Washington on May 7th.

Next in importance to the President of the United States is the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. The first Chief Justice was the Hon. John Jay. He had been President of Congress, and resigned to go abroad to help negotiate the treaty which Boudinot, as his successor, signed. He succeeded Dr. Boudinot as President of the American Bible Society. His example of active interest in the American Bible Society was followed by Chief Justices John Marshall, Salmon P. Chase, and Melville W. Fuller; and by Justices James McLean, John M. Harlan, David J. Brewer, Charles E. Hughes, and many other Judges of the Supreme Court.

Other national statesmen—Vice-Presidents, Cabinet Members, Gover-

John C. Brigham Secretary of the American
Bible Society New York.

Washington 17 April 1827.

Sir

Your Letter of the 22.d ult.o informing me in the name of the managers of the American Bible Society that the anniversary of that Institution will be celebrated in New York on the second Thursday in May next, has been received: I am grateful to the Managers, for their invitation to me as one of the Vice Presidents of the Society to be present on that occasion— An invitation with which I should be happy to comply but for indispensable avocations. My best wishes will be there and ever with them.

I remain, with respectful consideration, your associate and fellow-Citizen

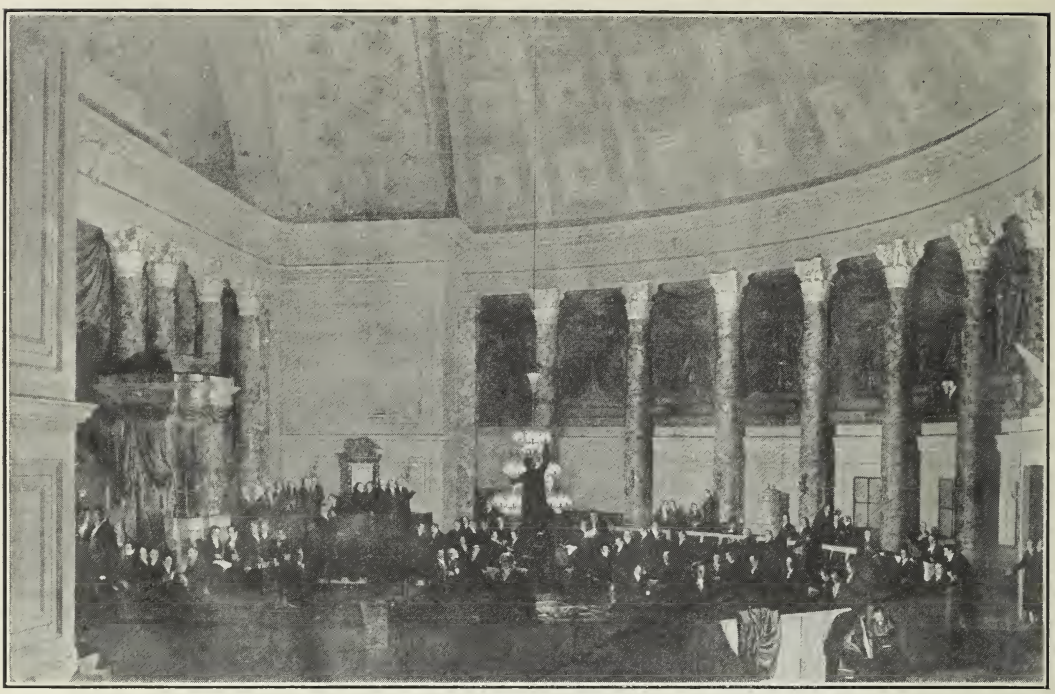
John Quincy Adams.

nors, Senators, Congressmen, Judges, who have assisted and guided the Bible Society are too numerous to mention. It was while he was Secretary of State that John Quincy Adams became a Vice-President of the Society. In this dual activity as a Secretary of State and a supporter of the Bible Society, he has been followed by William H. Seward, James G. Blaine, Frederick T. Frelinghuysen, John Hay, John W. Foster, and William J. Bryan. De Witt Clinton, the great early Governor of the Empire State, came down from Albany to sit in the monthly meetings of the Board of Managers of the Society. Many Governors have given the Society aid with their personal money and their official influence. The facsimile of signatures to the National Appeal issued in 1904, reproduced on page 27, shows that the Society has had support not only from national statesmen of long-gone days.

It would be a small view indeed that limited the term "National Leaders" to those in official positions. Our country has been blessed and built up by national leaders in many lines. And the Bible Society rejoices in its noble array of friends and fosterers who have also been national leaders in spheres other than the direct service of the State. The purpose of this article and the limits of space forbid even adequate reference to ministerial giants, such as Doctors Lyman Beecher, Richard S. Storrs, William Adams, Stephen B. Tyng, Sr., and Bishop J. F. Hurst; leaders of the bar, such as Marshall S. Bidwell, Charles Tracy, and Nathan Bishop; financiers, such as William B. Astor, James Lenox, James B. Brown, and John S. Kennedy; authors, such as James Fenimore Cooper and Francis Scott Key; soldiers, such as Col. Richard Varick, Gen. Stephen Van Rensselaer and Gen. O. O. Howard; educators, such as Eliphalet Nott of Union, Theodore Frelinghuysen of Rutgers, Mark Hopkins of Williams, Theodore B. Woolsey of Yale, and Daniel C. Gilman of Johns Hopkins; great business men, such as Frederick S. Winston, William E. Dodge; and many others worthy of mention, who have rendered their country and this Society noble service. But the present purpose is particularly concerning those connected with the National Government.

Congress and the Bible

Recognition of, and encouragement to, the Society has been accorded not only by individual national leaders, however. It has come also from Congress itself. In 1844, in 1866, and in 1874, the Hall of the House of Representatives was opened to meetings in the interests of the American Bible Society. On the first occasion the venerable John Quincy Adams was in the chair and delivered a masterly address. In 1866, the Jubilee of the Bible Society was celebrated in the Hall of the House of Representatives by several addresses on the influence of the Bible, and the work of the Bible Society. In 1874, the Anniversary Meeting of the Society was there held, welcomed in an address by the Hon. James G. Blaine,



HALL OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, 1844; NOW THE HALL OF STATUARY

Photograph of the original (8′ x 11′) in the Corcoran Gallery, Washington, D. C., painted by Samuel F. B. Morse, in 1822, the faces being portraits of representatives who sat for them. The new Argand lights are being lit by the man in the center.

Many do not know that the inventor Morse was also a painter, and once President of the National Academy of Design.

then Speaker of the House of Representatives, "by whose courtesy the use of the Hall had been tendered to the Society for that occasion." Other national figures also then took part "before a large assembly."

A society having support and guidance from national leaders of the caliber indicated would be expected to have touched the national life directly and greatly. This the American Bible Society has done. Only a bare outline of this service can be given.

As already noted, while one of the great factors that explains the notable achievement of the Society has been the assistance rendered by national statesmen, the greatest factor is undoubtedly that its sole purpose has been to magnify the Word of God, and to weave its teachings into the warp and woof of the national life.

The founders of our Republic realized the importance of the Bible as essential to the right development of the nation. For, in the very midst of their struggle, before any Bible society in the world had been organized—once in 1777, and again in 1782—"The United States in Congress assembled," took specific official action toward the obtaining and the supply of Bibles.

Loss of anything usually emphasizes its value. So, perhaps, with the colonial fathers. England had retained in her own hands, throughout the colonial days, the publication of English Bibles. None was published in the colonies. When the Revolution began, the supply of Bibles was cut off. Then, in 1777, Congress, acting on a petition that an edition of Bibles be printed by the government, referred the memorial to a committee whose report recognized the importance of the Bible to the United States, and suggested a prompter, more practical way of meeting the urgent need; that is, that Congress empower its committee to import 20,000 copies of the Bible. "This order was accordingly made."

But Congress did more than this. The first English Bible ever printed in America was put out under the auspices of the Continental Congress, from whose records the following extract is made:

September 2, 1782.

RESOLVED, That the United States in Congress assembled, . . . recommend this edition of the Bible to the inhabitants of the United States.

(Signed) CHARLES THOMSON,
Secretary.

The Bible named was printed by Robert Aitken, a printer of Philadelphia, in 1782. It had been submitted to, and approved by, a special committee of Congress, having been carefully inspected and compared by the two chaplains of Congress, as the Congressional records reveal.

It is interesting to know that the first Bible ever printed in America was that translated by John Eliot for the Massachusetts Indians, and printed almost one hundred and twenty years earlier—in 1663. A German Bible was the second printed in America. It was printed in 1743, at Philadelphia.

The thought of the Continental Congress in furthering the printing of this first English Bible was evidently that expressed by Gen. Ulysses S. Grant nearly a century later: "Hold fast to the Bible as the sheet anchor of our liberties. To the influence of this book we are indebted for the progress made in true civilization, and to this we must look as our guide in the future."

THE SOCIETY AND NATIONAL LIFE

The American Bible Society was founded and has been fostered by those who have felt deeply the importance of the circulation and influence of the Bible among the growing population, and the incoming hosts with their strange tongues. The dearth of Scriptures among the older settlers and the pioneers on the frontiers, and the need of other than English Scriptures had greatly impressed Samuel J. Mills on two journeys of investigation, made in 1812 and 1813, to French Louisiana. His insistent arguments and fervor, perhaps more than anything else, finally brought about the united action that produced the Society. He believed, with

Thomas Jefferson: "I always have said, and always will say, that the studious perusal of the Sacred Volume will make better citizens, better fathers, and better husbands."

In fulfillment of this phase of its object, the Bible Society made four nation-wide campaigns, in 1829, in 1856, in 1866, and in 1882, to supply the increasing population with the Scriptures. Subsequently these spasmodic efforts gave way to a steady supply through a system of Home Agencies and colporteurs. Thus the Bible has been reaching out across the prairies to the ranchmen and settlers, going with the "Forty-niners" to California and climbing into mountain fastnesses to lumbermen and miners.

Special Needs and Special Classes

In 1831 a cry was voiced by the Nez Perce chief, who, with three companions, had come from the far Pacific, over the mighty Rockies, and across unpeopled prairies in a Western "Quest of the Holy Grail." His plea for the white man's "Book of Heaven" was heard and answered by the Bible Society. It has given the "Book of Heaven" in their own languages to the Delaware, Mohawk, Seneca, Ojibway, Nez Perce, Cherokee, Sioux (Dakota), Muskogee, Creek, Arapahoe, Winnebago, and Navaho Indians. Sad and bad as are some of the records of our treatment of the red men, in this historic fact the Bible Society has enabled America to take pride.

Other special needs and special classes have been met and served by the Bible Society. During the great fratricidal Civil War the Bible Society was working for peace by sending out the Scriptures. Over 3,000,000 volumes were distributed among the soldiers of the North. Hundreds of thousands were sent, without charge, through the lines to the soldiers of the South by the aid of the commanding generals of both sides—a unique event in the annals of war. Since their emancipation a special Agency has been maintained to supply Scriptures to the colored people of the South. Nor have the Island wards of the United States been neglected. In the eighteen years since the Philippines became our charge, the American Bible Society has put the Scriptures into eight of their languages and dialects: Ibanag, Ifugao, Ilocano, Lanao Moro, Pampangan, Panayan, Samareno, and Visayan.

The very first service of the Society was to supply Scriptures in French for the new citizens in Louisiana in 1816. With the multiplying tongues that have come to our shores the Society has multiplied the languages in which the Bible could greet them until last year it actually supplied the Scriptures in 91 languages to people in the United States of America—foreign lands during the same year having called for but 90 languages from its Agents! It prints the Scriptures in 45 languages at its New York headquarters.

Only the national aspect of the American Bible Society work is here

A NATIONAL APPEAL

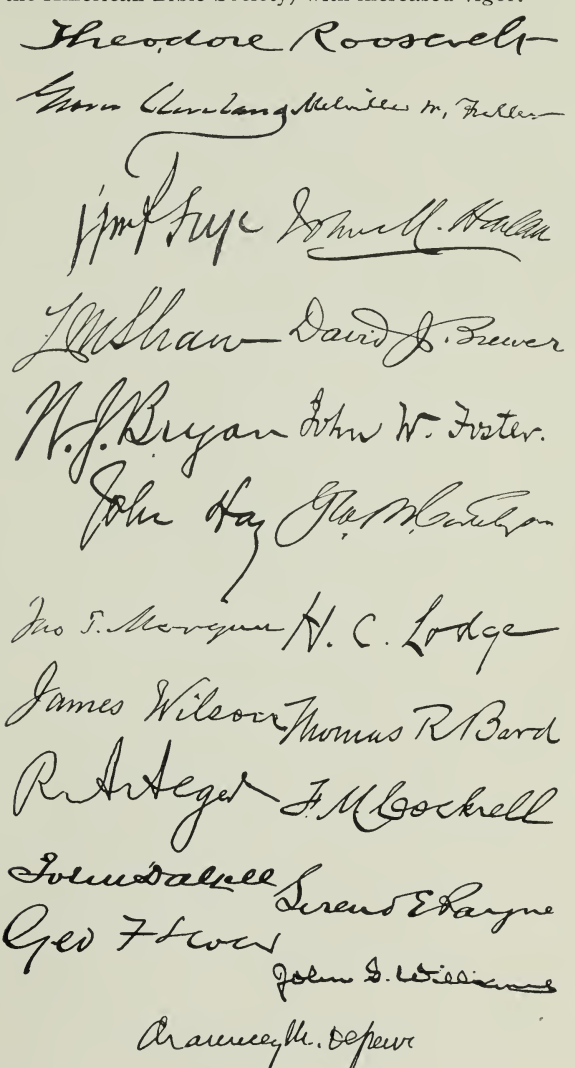
ISSUED IN 1904

(Extracts)

"The social fabric of modern states has no surer foundation than the Bible, especially in a republic like ours, which rests upon the moral character and educated judgment of the individual. No thoughtful man can doubt that to decrease the circulation and use of the Bible among the people would seriously menace the highest interest of civilized humanity.

* * * * *

We owe a debt to the Bible which can be partly paid now by carrying forward this great undertaking (of the American Bible Society) with increased vigor."



under consideration, and, therefore, nothing is said of the great foreign work and the 45,000,000 Scriptures issued in foreign lands. Yet who can measure the influence of the 70,000,000 of Scriptures which the American Bible Society has supplied and circulated (not for profit) in the United States alone during this century? Thousands upon thousands, as individuals, have found great spiritual benefit from the Bibles they have received, and have found true what Abraham Lincoln said, "Take all of this book upon reason that you can, and the balance by faith, and you will live and die a better man." This is in itself an untold benefit to the body politic.

And yet there is a vital national service which the Bible Society has been accomplishing by this great circulation. For the Bible breeds ideas of true liberty, of brotherly equity, of social service, of industrial justice, of national obligations, and of world redemption. The Bible, being the most ubiquitous and universally read book, is ever having a unifying influence on individuals and communities and sections and nations, and continents, and hemispheres, and the world, giving to all its ideas and ideals, drawing them together in the accomplishment of its beneficent teachings.

Great China and the weakest nations alike gratefully remember John Hay and his "Golden Rule diplomacy." Whence was it drawn? It is for us to remember, with President Wilson, that "A man has deprived himself of the best there is in the world who has deprived himself of this" (a knowledge of the Bible). It is for us to-day to acknowledge and proclaim with Daniel Webster of a bygone but great day: "If we abide by the principles taught in the Bible our country will go on prospering and to prosper; but if we and our posterity neglect its instructions and authority, no man can tell how sudden a catastrophe may overwhelm us and bury our glory in profound obscurity."

The American Bible Society has achieved greatly because, throughout the century, it has had one noble object, the constant wise councils of national leaders, the influential, generous support of unnumbered hosts, and the summons of ever-increasing opportunity. It is a national institution because it has contributed to a great national growth. It exists that it may increasingly contribute to a still larger national life. Rejoicing in the honor and accomplishments of the past, it looks to the future with courage and expectation.

CENTENNIAL PAMPHLETS

SMALL QUARTO (7½ x 8¾)

1 **The Bible, the Book of Mankind,** by Prof. B. B. Warfield, D.D., LL.D. 16 pages.

2 **The Bible in Europe,** by Prof. A. Kuyper, D.D., LL.D., of Holland. 12 pages.

3 **The Greek Testament,** The Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople with the collaboration of the Bishop of Nicea, the Bishop of Sardis and the Bishop of Seleucia. 12 pages.

4 **The Hebrew Bible,** by Rev. S. B. Rohold, F. R. G. S., of Toronto. 12 pages.

5 **The Birthplace of the Bible Society,** and other historical papers. 28 pages.

SMALL OCTAVO (5 x 7¼)

10 **The Bible Among the Nations,** by Rev. Henry Otis Dwight, LL.D. 32 pages.

11 **Around the World for the Centennial,** illustrated, by Rev. William Ingraham Haven, D.D.*

12 **The American Bible Society in China,** by Rev. John R. Hykes, D.D. 54 pages.

13 **The Bible in Korea,** by Rev. George Heber Jones, D.D. 20 pages.

14 **The Bible in the Life of the Indians of the United States,** by Rev. Thomas C. Moffett, D.D. 24 pages.

15 **The Bible in Brazil,** by Rev. Hugh C. Tucker. 28 pages.

16 **Spiritual Victories in Latin America: Mr. Penzotti's Autobiography.** 74 pages.

17 **Light After Dark Centuries—In the Philippines.***

18 **The Bible in the Land of the White Elephant—Siam.***

19 **The American Bible Society in India.**

20 **Specimen Verses of Scripture in Languages and Dialects.** 60 pages.*

21 **Printed Versions of the Bible,** by Bernhard Pick, Ph.D., D.D.*

22 **Translations of the Scriptures into the Chinese Languages,** by Rev. John R. Hykes, D.D.*

*In preparation.

Single copies of these pamphlets may be had, postpaid, for 5 cents each; in quantities of 10 or more at 3 cents each. Order from

The Secretaries, American Bible Society, Astor Place, New York City, or from Agency Secretaries.

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